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WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION
Food Distribution Administration
Washington 25, D.C.

July 14, 1943

FOOD INDUSTRIES LABOR BRANCH MEMORANDUM NO. 3

To: All Branch and Division Chiefs

From: Arthur J. Holmaas, Acting Chief, Food Industries Labor Branch

Subject: Functions and Responsibilities of the Food Industries Labor Branch

- A. In accordance with the functions of the Food Industries Labor Branch assigned in Director's Memorandum No. 2, the Food Industries Labor Branch will perform specific functions necessary to the maintenance of effective working relationships between the War Food Administration, the food industries, and the War Manpower Commission, the War Labor Board and other agencies with regard to food processing and distribution labor.

These specific functions necessitate work related to three major fields of activity:

1. Activities involving retention of necessary workers, recruitment, and orderly replacement of workers in these industries.
2. Activities involving wage problems in these industries.
3. Activities involving manpower utilization and employer-employee relationships in these industries.

B. General Responsibilities

In the three major fields of activity outlined above, the Food Industries Labor Branch will maintain such relationships with the various agencies whose programs affect manpower, with the various Branches of the Food Distribution Administration and with the industry as are necessary to assure that:

1. Detailed facts about the current production situation in the food industries and the effect of various labor and wage programs upon the food situation are currently made available to the agencies whose programs affect manpower.

2. Comprehensive information on the labor and wage situation in the food industries and the relationship of this situation to food supplies is currently available to the War Food Administration.
3. Necessary assistance is given to the food industries either through advice on means and methods to adjust to various labor and wage programs or through assuring that the peculiarities of labor and wage conditions in these industries are given due consideration in the formulation and administration of labor and wage programs.

C. Necessity for Assuming These Responsibilities in the Food Distribution Administration

Effective management of food supplies in processing, transportation, storage and distribution channels is contingent upon the manpower situation in each activity. The manpower situation in each activity is the composite of many factors which impinge upon the supply of labor and the productivity of the labor available for each activity.

These factors include wage stabilization policies; wage and hour policies; labor standards; working conditions, housing conditions for workers; transportation facilities for workers; employer-employee relations; worker morale; labor turnover; absenteeism; Selective Service policies; the quantitative supply of various types of workers in terms of age, sex and experience; recruitment and placement facilities; training facilities; employment stabilization policies; and similar factors which affect labor availability and labor productivity. Various Federal and State agencies are administering programs involving these factors. No single agency is responsible for all these programs and no single program involving any of these factors is confined exclusively to the food industries.

The Food Distribution Administration has a direct responsibility for assuring that the necessary food is processed and distributed. Concurrently, the Food Distribution Administration has a direct responsibility to the various food processors and food distributors, with which it has contracts or agreements, to assure that they will not be asked or expected to do the impossible in view of the manpower problems which confront them. It also has the corollary responsibility of making every effort to assist the food industries in operating within current manpower policies so that a maximum of necessary goods and services may be produced.

Because of these responsibilities of the Food Distribution Administration and because no single agency is responsible for all manpower programs affecting the food industries, a focal point has been provided within the Food Distribution Administration to which the food industries can turn for advice and assistance on manpower problems and from which reports and recommendations on the effect on the food situation of various manpower policies and programs can be supplied to the offices and agencies responsible for administration of specific manpower or food programs.

D. Operations

In performing its designated functions and in discharging its responsibilities, the operations of the Food Industries Labor Branch is primarily of a liaison and planning nature. In the maintenance of communications and liaison with the food industries, the Food Industries Labor Branch will whenever possible work through such channels as are existent within the Food Distribution Administration.

In its relations with other governmental agencies, the Food Industries Labor Branch has developed rapid channels of communication and effective working relationships and will maintain continuous liaison with the War Manpower Commission and its constituent agencies; the U. S. Employment Service, the Selective Service System, and the Bureau of Program Planning and Manpower Utilization; the Department of Labor and its constituent agencies, the Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Division, the U. S. Conciliation Service, the Children's and Women's Bureaus and the Bureaus of Labor Standards and Labor Statistics; the War Labor Board, the National Labor Relations Board; the Office of Civilian Defense; the National Housing Administration; and such other Government agencies whose programs affect manpower problems.

Arthur Holmes

